different Finance Ministers. Please don't mislead the House. All along, it has been comparison of BE with BE. For the first time in my life I am seeing that the Finance Minister is making a comparison between the RE and the BE. You go through the Finance Minister's statements every year, year after year, and you will find comparisons BE with BE. In exceptional cases it has been done between RE and BE. Please remember that.

SHRI RAM NAIK: This issue can be raised when the Finance Bill is discussed. So far as my figures are concerned, I have no option but to give the figures, of what was done last year and what we propose to do this year. It is quite natural that the last year's figures, that is, the revised estimates, are required to be given. The question asked is, "What do we propose to do?" What we propose to do has been given by way of the allocation. That is what we are expected to do.

SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: Sir, in all developing countries, access to micro credit is being regarded as one of the measures for generating self-employment. Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what measures are being taken Statewise for access to micro-credit in rural areas, particularly for women, so that the process of migration from rural to urban areas can be arrested.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, these are matters of detail. If a separate question on it is asked, I can give the information. But, our effort is that the migration from rural areas to urban areas is arrested. That can be done only if we provide more employment and have more production in the rural areas. That is what we are trying to do.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. Question No. 524.

श्री नरेश यादव: महोदय, इसमें आपका संरक्षण चाहिए। मैंने दो प्रश्नों पर अपना नाम पहले भी दिया लेकिन आपने कृपा का अवसर नहीं दिया .. (व्यवधान)..

श्री सभापति: देखिए, 15 मिनट हो गए हैं। श्री द्रुपद बरगोंहाई ...(व्यवधान) नेक्स्ट क्वेश्चन ...(व्यवधान) अब नहीं।

श्री नरेश यादव: अभी तक आपकी कृपा नहीं हो रही है ...(व्यवधान)

श्री सभापति: अब नेक्स्ट क्वेश्चन हो गया है ...(व्यवधान)

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Sir, the hon. Minister has to answer on micro-credit and migrations. Please protect the Member. Micro-credit is very different from migration. The hon. Member wanted to know about the micro-credit, not about the migration. He has not said anything about the micro-credit.

श्री शमशेर सिंह सुरजेवाला: मैंने सबसे पहले नाम लिखवाया, 50 दफे हाथ खड़ा किया और आपने मुझे मौका नहीं दिया...(व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 524. Mr. Borgohain.

Food Processing Industries in North-East

*524. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how many units of food processing industries have been set-up by Government in North-Eastern States during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have any plan to use the large production of pineapples in that area for food processing industries; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to preserve the fruits produced in that region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Food Processing Industries operate both in the large/mediumscale of "organised" sector and the "unorganised" small tiny and cottage and household sectors. Given their nature, data on the tiny, cottage and household sector including on the number of such units are not available.

According to the Annual Survey of Industries 1994-95 published by the Central Statistical Organisation (Department of Statistics), there were 29407 factories of all types in the various product categories of the food processing industry e.g. cereals, milk, fruit and vegetables. The statewise distribution of these factories is set out in the Statement-I (*See* below)

The Annual Survey of Industries covers all factories registered under Section 2m(i) and 2m(ii) of the Factories Act 1948, employing10

or more workers and using electrical power, and those employing 20 or more workers but not using electrical power on any day of the preceding 12 months.

Food Processing companies specifically relating to the Fruit & Vegetables Sector are required to take a licence from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries under the Fruit Products Order (FPO) as amended till 1997 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act. 4932 Fruit and Vegetable Processing Units have been licensed under FPO upto January, 1998. Their Statewise distribution is given in the Statement-II. (*See* below)

As part of its promotional role to boost investment in the processed food sector, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries provides policy support in creating a favourable business environment and financial assistance through its Plan Schemes, for creation of infrastructural facilities and processing capacities for a variety of processed foods, including pineapple. Details of schemes are given in the Statement-III. (*See* below)

Processed Food Industries in the North East.

The North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC), a public sector enterprise of this Ministry had set up a Pineapple Juice Concentrate Plant at Nalkata, Tripura in 1988-89. It has processed 9700 metric tonnes of pineapple and produced 600 metric tonnes of pineapple juice concentrate from 1988-89 to 31.3.1998. During 1997-98, it processed 1293 metric tonnes of pineapples to produce 80 tonnes of pineapple juice concentrate. The Forporation is presently sick, and has, therefore, been registered with the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). However, a major effort to revive the company and make it a healthy, indeed dynamic enterprise effectively leading the processed food industries in the North East is being initiated by the Ministry.

The outlay of the Ministry for projects involving the setting up/expansion/ modernisation of food processing industries and the creation of infrastructural facilities for the processed food industry in the country during 1998-99 is Rs. 21 crores. Around 10% of this outlay is expected to be spent on projects having a bearing on the preservation of fruits and vegetables and other processed foods in the North Eastern States.

Statement-I

State wise number of Food Processing Units in the Factory Sector as per Annual Survey of Industries (1994-95)*

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of Factories
1.	Andhra Pradesh	10183
2.	Assam	734
3.	Bihar	433
4.	Goa	34
5.	Gujarat	1270
6.	Haryana	600
7.	Himachal Pradesh	46
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	69
9.	Karnataka	1221
10.	Kerala	1170
11.	Madhya Pradesh	1302
12.	Maharashtra	2420
13.	Manipur	9
14.	Meghalaya	3
15.	Nagaland	5
16.	Orissa	425
17.	Punjab	1196
18.	Rajasthan	515
19.	Tamil Nadu	3792
20.	Tripura	22
21.	Uttar Pradesh	2652
22.	West Bengal	1089
23.	Chandigarh	36
24.	Deman & Diu	5
25.	Delhi	125
26.	Pondicherry	42
27.	Others	9
	TOTAL	29407

[*The Annual Survey of Industries covers all factoreis registered under Section 2m(i) and 2m(ii) of the Factories Act, 1948, employing 10 or more workers and using electrical power and those employing 20 or more workers but not using electrical power on any day of the preceding 12 months].

Statement-II

State wise Distribution of Fruits & Vegetable Licensed Under the Fruits Products Order (FPO) Amended Till 1997 as on 1st January 1998

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of Fruits & Vegetable Processing units
1.	Andhra Pradesh	300
2.	Assam	25
3.	Bihar	58
4.	Gujarat	260
5.	Haryana	151
6.	Himachal Pradesh	90
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	83
8.	Karnataka	253
9.	Kerala	387
10.	Madhya Pradesh	104
11.	Maharashtra	934
12.	Meghalaya	14
13.	Manipur	9
14.	Nagaland	5
15.	Orissa	43
16.	Punjab	309
17.	Rajasthan	110
18.	Sikkim	3
19.	Tamil Nadu	452
20.	Tripura	4
21.	Uttar Pradesh	494
22.	West Bengal	298
23.	Andaman & Nicobar	3
24.	Arunachal Pradesh	3
25.	Chandigarh	54
26.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	7
27.	Delhi	302
28.	Goa, Daman & Diu	160
29.	Mizoram	3
30.	Pondicherry	14
	TOTAL	4932

Statement-III

Plan schemes of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries for Development of Processed Food Sector 1997—2002

The following Plan Schemes are being operated by the Ministry for development of processed food sector during the 9th Plan period.

1. Creation of Infrastructural facilities for food processing industries.
2. Creation of Post-harvest handling facilites including setting up of cold storages, cold chein and pre-cooling facilities, including setting up of Food Processing Industrial Estates with common processing facilities such as analytical/quality control laboratories, cold storages/modified atomsheric cold storages, polution control fascilities etc. and creation of infrastructural facilities for preservation and processing of fish.
3. Support for setting up/modernisation/ expansion of food processing units (including encouraging the concept of factory on wheels, low cost preservation technology etc. and setting up projects for meat, poultry & dairy products).
4. Supporting traditional fish processing technologies and utilization of law-value fish by projects addressing commercial production of value added products like protein concentrates, fish wafers & popularization of cheap indigenous technology of drying fish.
5. Strengthening backward linkages, particularly for Horticulture-based and Grain Processing Industries.
6. Marketing support for processed foods: Generic advertisement, helping small and tiny units market their products through brand name of established units etc.
7. Research & Development Programmes, including setting-up of quality control labs.
8. Manpower development programmes: Training in Prcessing Technology in horticulture, cereals, fish and meat.
9. Support for Studies/Surveys/Seminars, and awarencess programmes, Entrepreneurship Development Programmes etc.
10. Support for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCT), Total Quality Management (TQM) and ISO-9000 certification.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Sir, let me first thank the hon. Minister for giving me the reply in detail.

Sir, the hon. Minister, in his reply says that the North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC), a public sector enterprise of this Ministry has set up a

Pineapple Juice Concentrate Plant at Nalkata, Tripura in 1988-89. It is a big help for the pineapple cultivators of Tripura. Sir, Meghalaya and Assam also produce a large quantity of pineapples of good quality. Will his Ministry set up projects of this type in Meghalaya as well as in Assam in the near future? Has he any plan to do so?

SHRI SOMPAL: Sir, the Ministry does not have any plan to set up such a plant in any of the North-East States. But, we have several plants to promote setting up of such plants. If anybody comes, we would provide assistance to the private company, NGO Government, cooperative or any kind of organisation, which comes forward to take up such a project.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Sir, I had asked the Minister whether the Government has any plan to preserve the fruits produced in the region. The Minister replies that different schemes are there for this purpose. Now, I ask him what concrete measures have been taken to implement these scheme in the North-Eastern region States. How many units to preserve fruits are to be set up in the near future?

SHRI SOMPAL: Sir, I have said there are several schemes, but the Ministry does not have any plan to set up on its own any such project. But, If anybody comes, we will provide assistance. There are so many schemes. I can give details to the hon. Member.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Sir, the North-Eastern region is basically an agricultural area and a lot of fruits produced through horticulture and agriculture go waste because of meagre fruit preservation facilities created so far. It is also known that the private investment is very meagre in that area for obvious reasons. Since the Central Government has an undertakng—the North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation and a working capital subsidy of Rs. 50 lakhs has been provided to the undertaking and because there is no procedure through which the Government will initiate an action for establishment of cold-storage and other infrastructural facilities, I would like to know whether through this public sector undertaking, the Government will at least make arrangement for installing a few cold storage plants, as has been said in the Central Plan in Statement-III. In Statement-III, he has stated that there are proposals for creation of infrastructural facilities for food processing industries and also creation of post-harvest handling facilities, including setting up of cold storage, cold chain and pre-cooling facilities. If we want to boost up agricultural production and export these products to the neighbouring countries, these pre-cooling and cold chain facilities in the North-East are a must. I want to know precisely from the hon. Minister whether this NERAMAC can be utilised for setting up cold chain and other facilities.

SHRI SOMPAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Coropration (NERAMAC) was set up in the North-East precisely with this obective in mind. But unfortunately the performance of his organisation has not been satisfactory. It was set up with the objective of building marketing facilities, infrastructural facilities and processing facilities, for setting up of food processing units in the North-East. It was also meant for providing regular and systematic marketing failities for agrohorticultural products of the region so that producers can get remunerative prices. It was also meant for supplementing the efforts of the North-Eastern States in procurement, processing and marketing of horticulture and other agricultural crops of the region. It was given an authortised capital of Rs. 5 crores and its paid-up capital is Rs. 3.69 crores. For several reasons, the performance has not been up to the mark. So far as the setting up of chain and cold storage and cooling facilities is concerned, this is one of the integral components of the whole strategy. But I will again revert back to my reply in response to the earlier question that the entrepreneurial initiative in the North-East States has been very bleak. If any organisation, whether in the Government sector, cooperative sector, private sector or if any NGOs come forward, we would provide assistance.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Mr. Chairman, Sir my question related to the NERAMAC. I wanted to know whether the NERAMAC will be entrusted to instal cold chain facilities because no other private parties are coming forward to set up these facilities. That was my question.

SHRI SOMPAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir we do not propose to assign this work to the

NERAMAC because of its poor performance in the objectives for which it was set up.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Mr. Chirman, Sir, in Tripura, about 35,00,000 tonnes of pineapple are produced every year, no to speak of quantity, but quality is also good. Now, the growers have to make distress sale for want of proper marketing facilities. Now, in the reply the Minister has indicated that there is one North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC) in our state now, it is sick. It has been stated that effective measures have been taken to revive the company. I want to know from the Minister what concrete steps the Government has taken to revive the company. This is (a) part. Part (b) of my question is: Bangladesh has a good market for Tripura's pinerapples. You know that Tripura is a landlocked State. It has a long porous border with Bangladesh. Therefore, thousands and thousands of pineapples and jack fruits are being smuggled into Bangladesh. I want to know from the Minister whether the Government will start a dialogue with Bangladesh to have border trade with that Country. Part (c) of my question is: The State Industry Department has a food processing unit. Although it is a promising one, now it is limping. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India will consider giving more funds for modernisation of that unit, as demanded by the State Government.

SHRI SOMPAL: Mr. Chairman, as already stated by me, the performance of this company has not been satisfactory. This company has turned sick and was referred to the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) in December, 1996. In the first hearing of the BIFR held in April, 1997....(*Interruptions*).....

SHRI KHAGEN DAS: What concrete steps has the Government taken. You have mentioned here that steps will be taken, an initiative will be taken to revive the company. What are those steps?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is only a simple question. Please give a simple answer.

SHRI SOMPAL: I am coming to that. It has been referred to the BIFR. It is under their consideration. It all depends on the BIFR.

SHRI KHAGAN DAS: What about the border trade?

SHRI SOMPAL: We would try to look into its possibility. (*Interruption*). If there is any specific proposal, it would surely be considered.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: This can be brought into the SAPTA also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Dr. Manmohan Singh.

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: The hon. Minister has admitted that he is not satisfied with the working of the North Eastern Agricultural Marketing Corporation. There are two separate issues; one is of the pineapple factories located in Tripura and the other of the general functioning of the NERAMAC. It is well known that it is a public sector entity of the Central Government which is weak organisationally as well as management-wise. What steps is the hon. Minister going to take to tone up the management and organisation of the NERAMAC?

SHRI SOMPAL: The Ministry is taking certain actions without waiting for the BIFR decisions too and the ones which are under consideration...(*Interruptions*). It has been referred to the BIFR but we are taking certain other initiatives also to find out the ways out, how we can revamp the functioning. And the NERAMAC has already secured orders for supply of about 125 metric tons of pineapple juice concentrate from two private companies, M/s Concept Food, Hyderabad, and M/s Moneycraft & Finetech Ltd., Chennnai. Moreover, for a small investment of Rs. 12 lakhs, the existing packaging line which has been defunct right from its setting up is being sought to be revived. These are the two initiatives which we are taking. We are trying to expedite with the BIFR too.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Thank you, sir. I had the fortune of working with the present Minister as a member of the Agricultural Expert Committee in the last two years and we had worked a good deal with no less a person than Dr. Swaminathan. We wanted agriculture to be taken up in different segments in the North-East. I would like to know whether the Minister, as he promised earlier, will take some practical efforts as early as possible to implement the recommendations of that Expert Committee.

SHRI SOMPAL: The hon. Member, Mr. Chaliha, is right. We have worked together under Dr. M.S. Swaminathan to go into the reasons and factors responsible for low productivity in agriculture in the North-Eastern States and to also devise means to improve it. And it was an important Expert Committee. We all had given our own inputs and the Committee visited the North-East twice at least to make an on-the-spot study of the various phenomena and factors and any recommendation given by the Swaminathan Committee will surely be considered by the Ministry.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, the hon. Minister, in his reply, has set out a number of steps to promote the food-processing industry in Statement III. As we know, many farmers have come forward to set up processing units and give employment to a number of people. But the Exit Policy announced by the Minister of Commerce has allwoed multinationals to come in this field. The import duties have also been reduced. This will adversely affect the Indian farmers' processing units. Will the Ministry of Agriculture take up this matter with the ministry of Commerce and see that no adverse effect or impact is suffered by these processing units?

SHRI SOMPAL: Mr. Chairman, I may state that there is no restriction on the food-processing units being set up by anybody in India. And the view of the hon. Member, who had been a senior Minister in Governments at the Centre as well as in the States Whosoever comes forward, is given assistance on a non-discriminatory basis. So far as his perception of the adverse impact of the multinationals coming is concerned, I may state that not many multinations have come. Only Rs. 1,200 and some odd crores have flowed since 1991 when the large scale liberlisation programme was embarked upon. So, not many companies have come and they are not likely to have any adverse impact. If they come, we would rather welcome them because it will enhance the market policy and the indigenous investment initivatives are also not very encouraging so far.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Extension of Concessional Gas for TNGCL

*525. SHRI KHAGEN DAS:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tripura Natural Gas Company Limited (TNGCL) had requested Government to extend concessional gas for TNGCL;

(b) if so, whether the same has been acceded to;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the above concession is applicable in North-East, except Tripura; and

(e) if so, the reasons for this discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) Tripura Natural Gas Co. Ltd. (TNGCL) has requested for a further discount over and above the concessional price at which natural gas is supplied to consumers in North-Eastern region.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) TNGCL is buying the natural gas at a concessional price available for consumers in North-Eastern region but is selling the same to its consumers at a much higher price. In the circumstances, the rationale for asking a further discount in the price of natural gas is not justifiable.

(d) Concessional price of natural gas is applicabel to all consumers in the North-Eastern region including Tripura. A further discount of Rs. 300 per thousand cubic meter is also available on a case to case basis for existing consumers as well as new consumers.

(e) The additional discount is available to the consumers only on a case to case basis. In view of (c) above, request of TNGCL was not agreed to.